

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 IO-12 AID-20 EUR-25 OMB-01 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-09 H-02 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03

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SUBJ: MR 2 WEEKLY CEASEFIRE OVERVIEW APR 16-21 1973

HEREWITH REPEAT NHA TRANG MESSAGE 414 QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L NHA TRANG 0414

SUBJECT: MR 2 WEEKLY CEASE- FIRE OVERVIEW, APRIL 16-21 (SIX- DAY PER IOD)

1. THE MILITARY SITUATION IN MR 2 REMAINED GENERALLY QUIET FOR THE SEVENTH CONSECUTIVE WEEK OF THE TWELVE- WEEK- OLD CEASE- FIRE PERIOD. ENEMY- INITIATED INCIDENTS AVERAGED ABOUT TEN PER DAY AND AGAIN CONSISTED MAINLY OF MININGS AND STAND- OFF ATTACKS BY FIRE, WITH ONLY OCCASIONAL GROUND ACTIONS AGAINST FRIENDLY POSITIONS.

2. A SIGNIFICANT PERCENTAGE OF THESE INCIDENTS OCCURRED IN NORTHERN BINH DINH, WHERE ARVN, RANGER AND RF UNITS IN THE NARROW STRIP OF GVN CONTROL ALONG QL-1 WERE FREQUENTLY SHELLLED. TWO MININGS (BINH THUAN ON APRIL 18 AND IN PHU YEN ON APRIL 20) WERE DIRECTED AGAINST THE NATIONAL RAILROAD. THE GVN NEVERTHELESS CONTINUES ITS EFFORTS TO RESTORE RAIL SERVICE ALMOST THE WHOLE LENGTH OF THE MR AND FROM THE COAST TO DALAT.

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3. THE GVN CONTINUED TO EMPLOY AIR STRIKES (" TRAINING MISSIONS") AT AN AVERAGE RATE OF 25-30 PER DAY AGAINST MAJOR TARGETS. THESE INCLUDE THE ENEMY REGIMENTS THREATENING THE PHU CU PASS IN BINH DINH. ON TWO CONSECUTIVE DAYS LATE IN THE WEEK VNAF SPOTTER PILOTS OBSERVED ENEMY TRUCKS NEAR THE WESTERN END OF THE PLEIKU/ DARLAC BORDER AND CALLED IN FIGHTER- BOMBERS, WHICH REPORTEDLY DESTROYED OR DAMAGED ALL OF THE VEHICLES.

4. HOWEVER, THERE ARE INCREASING NUMBERS OF REPORTS OF ENEMY ROAD- BUILDING, ROAD- IMPROVEMENT, AND VEHICULAR MOVEMENT OF SUPPLIES IN THE NORTHWESTERN HIGHLANDS AND IN NORTHERN BINH DINH. WE ARE ATTEMPTING TO GET A BETTER PICTURE OF SUCH ACTIVITY BY THE ENEMY REGION- WIDE AND WILL REPORT FURTHER ON THE SUBJECT WHEN OBTAINABLE INFORMATION HAS BEEN ASSEMBLED.

5. IN OTHER AREAS OF MAJOR INTEREST, THE STRETCH OF QL-19 LEADING TO DUC CO IN WESTERN PLEIKU, FORMERLY HOTLY CONTESTED, REMAINED QUIET, WHEREAS PARTS OF KONTUM, BOTH NORTHWEST AND SOUTHWEST OF THE PROVINCE CAPITAL, WHERE DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN THE OPPOSING SIDES HAD BEEN GOING ON UNTIL RECENTLY, HEATED UP LATE IN THE WEEK. IN THE LATEST INCIDENT, ON APRIL 20, AN UNKNOWN SIZED ENEMY FORCE MOUNTED TWO DAYLIGHT ATTACKS ON AN RF COMPANY, KILLING ONE FRIENDLY SOLDIER AND WOUNDING SEVEN OTHERS.

6. WE DO NOT YET KNOW WHETHER YESTERDAY' S ATTACKS IN KONTUM WERE PROVOKED BY FRIENDLY PATROLLING, BUT IT IS CLEAR IN ANY EVENT THAT SUCH INCIDENTS WILL LIMIT THE RECEPTIVITY OF MR 2 AND ARVN 23 RD DIVISION COMMANDERS TO FURTHER NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE ENEMY, THIS DESPITE THE FACT THAT EARLY IN THE WEEK NVA FORCES UNILATERALLY RELEASED ANOTHER 29 ARVN PRISONERS, ALMOST ALL OF THEM ABLE- BODIED.

7. THE PEACE - KEEPING APPARATUS REMAINED IN VERY LOW GEAR THIS WEEK. FOR EXAMPLE, THE GVN ELEMENT OF THE FUTURE TPJMC IN BINH THUAN ESSENTIALLY HAS NOTHING ELSE TO DO, SO IT HAS NOW BEGUN DOCUMENTING MINOR INCIDENTS IN THAT PROVINCE THAT WOULD HERETOFORE HAVE GONE UNREPORTED. ICCS SUB- REGIONAL TEAMS AT SEVERAL LOCATIONS HAVE REPORTEDLY COMPLETED THEIR INVESTIGATIONS OF ALL INCIDENTS SO FAR ASSIGNED TO THEM AND ARE AGAIN AS UNDEREMPLOYED, AT LEAST FOR THE MOMENT, AS THEY WERE IN EARLY MARCH.

8. THE HUNGARIANS IN CEASE- FIRE REGIONS 3 AND 4 SAY THEY WILL
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BEGIN TO ROTATE, BUT IN PECULIAR PATTERNS OF THEIR OWN, AT THE
END OF THIS MONTH.

9. WE REMAIN SOMEWHAT CONCERNED BY THE APPARENT LACK OF COORDINATION WITHIN THE GVN ON REFUGEE AFFAIRS. NOTHING APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN DONE TO QUIET THE FEARS IN KONTUM GENERATED BY PLANS TO RESETTLE PEOPLE IN DARLAC (LAST WEEK' S OVERVIEW). THIS WEEK, MOVEMENT OF NEARLY 2,000 REFUGEES FROM PHU YEN TO PHU BON WAS BEGUN TEN DAYS OR MORE AHEAD OF SCHEDULE, APPARENTLY AT THE WHIM OF ETHNIC MINORITIES MINISTER NAY LUETT. THIS PARTICULAR OPERATION HAS REPORTEDLY GONE WELL, BUT ITS PRECIPITATE IMPLEMENTATION RAISES QUESTIONS ABOUT GVN PLANNING.

10. THE REGIONAL POLITICAL FRONT REMAINED VERY QUIET. PREPARATIONS FOR VILLAGE ELECTIONS ARE GOING ON, BUT PARTIES OTHER THAN THE DEMOCRACY PARTY HAVE SO FAR GIVEN LITTLE INDICATION OF THEIR POSTURE.
ENGLE UNQUOTE
BUNKER

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